

*Six new mosquito samples test positive for West Nile in Suffolk Count*

Huntington, NY— Today, Congressman Steve Israel (D-Huntington), Suffolk County Legislator William Spencer and Suffolk County Legislator Steve Stern called on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help Long Island as it confirms presence of West Nile.

Rep. Israel said, “With West Nile Virus appearing around Suffolk County, the CDC and its partners in the federal government need to do all they can to protect Long Islanders. We need all levels of government to work together to make sure that Long Islanders know how to protect themselves, and this does not turn into a serious public health issue.”

Suffolk County Legislator Spencer said, “The West Nile virus, and other mosquito-borne diseases, seriously threaten public health especially here in Suffolk County. I join Congressman Israel in calling upon the CDC to provide financial and technical assistance to Suffolk County to help us adequately and effectively protect public health. As public servants it is our responsibility to do everything we can to protect our residents even during difficult financial times. ”

Suffolk County Legislator Stern said, “I join with Congressman Israel and my colleagues from all levels of government in calling for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to provide critically-needed assistance in controlling the spread of West Nile Virus and other insect-borne illnesses. West Nile has been detected throughout Long Island, and tick borne illnesses are a growing threat to public health. We look forward to working together to address this important issue.”

West Nile virus is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. The virus can cause serious illness, and in some cases, death. It is estimated that 20 percent of those who become infected will develop West Nile Fever. Mild symptoms include fever, headache and body aches and occasionally a skin rash and swollen lymph glands. Symptoms of severe infection, or West Nile encephalitis or meningitis, include high fever, muscle weakness, stupor and disorientation.

So far this season, two mosquito samples and one bird sample have tested positive for West Nile virus. This means that the virus is circulating among the local mosquito population and must be closely monitored.

Additionally, a study just released by the CDC on a parasitic illness spread by ticks, Babesiosis, reveals that New York is one of seven states from which 97 percent of Babesiosis cases originate. This disease can be life-threatening, especially for the elderly or those without a spleen and can also be carried by pets or spread through blood transfusion.

A resource guide for Suffolk County residents on mosquitoes and mosquito-borne illnesses can be found [here](#):

<http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Portals/0/Documents%20and%20Forms/Health%20Services/Seasonal/Mosquito%20Brochure.pdf>

Education materials directed at individuals and communities are available here:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/education.htm#materials> .

Education materials for medical professionals are available here:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/clinicians/index.htm> .

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